

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-25 are pending in the present invention. The Examiner rejected claims 1-25 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Mikurak (U.S. Patent No. 6,606,744) in view of Wyatt (U.S. Patent No. 6,041,411). In so doing, the Examiner stated:

As to claim 1, Mikurak discloses an e-commerce system [e.g., Fig. 4] for enabling the purchase of a package of products and services [e.g., Fig(s). 54-55], comprising:

a) a catalog database [e.g., see the modules 5300, 5324 of Fig. 53; Fig. 80; the Application Database of Fig. 121] comprising package data correlated to at least one package [e.g. see col. 178, lines 19-46].

b) a selection module coupled to the catalog database for allowing a customer to select a package for purchase [e.g. see the shopping Cart processing at col. 96 et seq., Fig. 55].

c) a resolution module coupled to the catalog database for resolving unresolved attributes of the one or more products in the selected package [e.g. see Problem Handling process 1502, FIG. 21; col. 46, lines 54-col. 48, lines 41].

Mikurak did not expressly disclosed that resolving the unresolved attribute of products in a package is by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package.

However, Wyatt disclosed a e-commerce system has a resolution module that resolving the unresolved attribute of products in a package is by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package [e.g., FIG. 7 and associated texts, col. 9, lines 29- col. 10, lines 40].

Applicants respectfully disagree.

The present invention is directed to an e-commerce solution that allows a customer to purchase a group of merchandise objects, known as a package. The package is predefined by the merchant. By grouping certain objects together to form a package and offering the package for purchase, the merchant can reap promotional and other advantages. For example, the merchant can promote new or low volume products with more popular, high volume products, thereby increasing sales volume overall.

The method and system of the present invention allows the merchant to define, and allows the customer to purchase, an unresolved package that includes one or more products that

have at least one unresolved attribute. According to the method and system of the present invention, a database catalog is provided that includes a plurality of cross-referenced tables that enable the customer to resolve unresolved attributes in a selected package. One such table is a catalog entry table (see Figure 2A of the present invention), which includes package data correlated to the unresolved package. The package data in the catalog entry table defines which products make up a package. The catalog entry table (Figure 2A) is cross-referenced against a product attribute table (Figure 2B), which describes which attribute types are associated with a product. The product attribute table, in turn, is cross-referenced against a product attribute value table (Figure 2C), which defines one or more values for each attribute type. Together, these and other tables allow the customer to resolve unresolved attributes of products that make up an unresolved package for purchase.

Accordingly the present invention, as recited in claims 1 and 10, provides:

1. An e-commerce system for enabling the purchase of a package, comprising:
 - (a) a catalog database comprising a catalog entry table including package data correlated to at least one unresolved package, wherein the at least one unresolved package includes one or more products with at least one unresolved attribute;
 - (b) a selection module coupled to the catalog database for allowing a customer to select an unresolved package for purchase; and
 - (c) a resolution module coupled to the catalog database for resolving the at least one unresolved attribute of the one or more products in the selected unresolved package by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package.

10. An e-commerce method for enabling the purchase of a package, comprising the steps of:
 - (a) providing a catalog database comprising a catalog entry table including package data correlated to at least one unresolved package, wherein the at least one unresolved package includes one or more products with at least one unresolved attribute;
 - (b) allowing a customer to select an unresolved package for purchase;
 and
 - (c) resolving the at least one unresolved attribute of the one or more

products in the selected unresolved package by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package.

Independent claims 15 and 17 are program product and computer-readable medium claims having scopes similar to claims 1 and 10, respectively.

The primary reference, Mikurak, is related to a sprawling network system that includes “transfer of information across the internet utilizing telephony routing information and internet protocol address information.” (Abstract). In one embodiment, Mikurak provides “a new kind of web architecture framework (called “WAF” in this document) that secures, administers, and audits electronic information use.” (Col. 82, lines 8-10). The WAF can be employed to generate a framework “like the one shown in FIG. 53 to support various features such as an electronic commerce component 5300, a content channels component 5302, an administrative component 5304, a customer relationship management component 5306, . . . or a web customer service component 5312.” (Col. 82, lines 1-7).

Mikurak is generally related to enabling and supporting commerce related web application services, such as shopping from a virtual catalog (col. 91, line 15 et seq.). In one section, Mikurak describes allowing a customer to buy products and services from a virtual catalog (col. 91, lines 17-42; Figure 54), and in another section, Mikurak describes a shopping cart function (col. 96, line 20 to col. 98, line 50). In yet another section, Mikurak describes allowing a customer to customize an item for purchase (col. 100, lines 1-42). In each of these descriptions, Mikurak provides *conceptual* ideas, but does not take the next step in teaching or suggesting how one would *implement* such conceptual functions. The present invention takes this step.

The secondary reference, Wyatt, is directed to minimizing the potential for unauthorized use of digital information, particularly software programs, digital content and other computer

information, by verifying user access rights to electronically transmitted digital information. In Wyatt, a second computer system transmits requested digital information to a requesting first computing system in wrapped form, which includes digital instructions that must be successfully executed, or unwrapped, before access to the digital information is allowed. Successful unwrapping requires that certain conditions must be verified in accordance with the digital instructions, thereby allowing access to the digital information.

Together Mikurak in view of Wyatt teaches a web-based commerce system that delivers executable digital products to purchasers. The executable digital products are “wrapped” according to Wyatt so that only the intended and authorized recipient is able to utilize the product.

Independent Claims 1, 10, 15 and 17

While Mikurak describes conceptually web based commerce and Wyatt provides authorized use, Applicants respectfully submit that Mikurak in view of Wyatt fails to teach or suggest the implementation described by the cooperation of elements recited in independent claims 1, 10, 15 and 17 of the present invention. In particular, Mikurak in view of Wyatt fails to teach or suggest “resolving the at least one unresolved attribute in the selected unresolved package by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package,” where the package data is in “a catalog entry table” in a “catalog database.”

Although Mikurak teaches an application database coupled to a database server in Figure 121, that database stores “application specific data” (col. 178, lines 16-27), and not “a catalog entry table including package data correlated to at least one unresolved package,” as recited in claims 1, 10, 15 and 17. Moreover, although Mikurak discloses the *concept* of allowing the customer to select available features of each of the items to be purchased (col. 100, lines 18-24),

it fails to teach or suggest resolving the unresolved attributes of products in a package “by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package,” as recited in claims 1, 10, 15 and 17.

The Examiner concedes that Mikurak is deficient in this manner, but asserts that Wyatt discloses a resolution module that resolves the unresolved attributes of products in a package by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package. In support, the Examiner points to Wyatt’s catalog file, illustrated in FIG. 7 and described at column 9, line 29 to column 10, line 40. Applicants disagree.

Wyatt’s catalog file resides on the client computer and is a product catalog which lists each of the products available to the user of the client computer. The product catalog lists only products and does not include packages, let alone unresolved packages. In the purchased products section of the catalog file, the attributes of a purchased product, e.g., product's SKU number, the product's file size, the product type (e.g., software executable or text), the command used to launch the product, whether the product is to be extracted to a file location on the client computer's hard disk outside of the catalog file, the name of such an extracted file saved on the hard disk, and whether the product is to be automatically launched upon purchase, are provided in the product file header section. None of these attributes is unresolved. In other words, these attributes are set when the product is purchased. Accordingly, Wyatt’s catalog file fails to teach or suggest resolving the unresolved attributes of products in a package “by accessing the package data correlated to the selected unresolved package,” as recited in claims 1, 10, 15 and 17.

Because Mikurak in view of Wyatt fails to teach or suggest the cooperation of elements recited in claims 1, 10, 15 and 17, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 10, 15 and 17 are

allowable over the cited references. Because claims 2-9, 11-14, 16, and 18-25 depend on claims 1, 10, 15 and 17, the above arguments are applicable, and for the reasons presented above, they too are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 2, 11, 16 and 18

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 11, 16 and 18 are allowable over Mikurak in view of Wyatt for additional and alternative reasons. Claims 2 and 11 recite:

2. The system of claim 1 wherein the catalog database further comprises:
 - (d) item data correlated to a plurality of items, wherein each item is fully resolved;
 - (e) a product attribute table that defines for each product at least one attribute type associated with the product; and
 - (f) a product attribute value table that defines at least one value for each attribute type.

11. The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein the catalog database further comprises a product attribute table and a product attribute value table, wherein the product attribute table defines for each product at least one attribute type associated with the product, and the product attribute value table defines at least one value for each attribute type.

Claims 16 and 18 are program product and computer-readable medium claims having scopes similar to claims 2 and 11, respectively.

Mikurak in view of Wyatt fails to teach or suggest “a product attribute table” and “a product attribute value table,” as recited in claims 2, 11, 16 and 18. The Examiner contends that Mikurak “discloses the catalog database comprising item data, product data and attribute data [e.g., Mikurak: the Item catalog screen processing, col. 97, line 49-59].” Applicants respectfully disagree. The cited portion of Mikurak describes an item catalog screen on which information on items is provided. The consumer places items into the shopping basket and the consumer is able to examine the shopping basket’s contents at any time.

There is no mention or suggestion of “a product attribute table” that “defines for each

product at least one attribute type associated with the product,” and/or “a product attribute value table” that “defines at least one value for each attribute type,” as recited in claims 2, 11, 16 and 18. For this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 2, 11, 16 and 18 are allowable over the cited references.

Claims 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 21

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, and 21 are allowable over Mikurak in view of Wyatt for additional and alternative reasons. Claims 12, 13, and 14 recite:

12. The method as claimed in claim 11, wherein resolving step (c) comprises utilizing the catalog entry table to determine automatically the one or more products in the selected unresolved package.

13. The method as claimed in claim 12, wherein resolving step (c) further comprises, for each of the one or more products in the selected unresolved package, utilizing the product attribute table to determine automatically the at least one unresolved attribute type.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein resolving step (c) further comprises allowing the customer to select an attribute value from the product attribute value table for the at least one unresolved attribute type thereby resolving the selected package.

Claims 19, 20 and 21 are computer-readable medium claims having scopes similar to claims 12, 13 and 14, respectively.

Claims 12-14 and 19-21 elaborate on the resolving step/instruction (c) of claim 10 and claim 17, respectively. They disclose how the catalog entry table, the product attribute table and the product attribute value table are used to resolve the at least one resolved attribute in the selected unresolved package.

Mikurak is not directed to implementation. Rather it is devoted to conceptual ideas. Accordingly, Mikurak fails to teach or suggest utilizing the various tables described above (e.g., in claims 2, 11, 16 and 18) in the manner recited in claims 12-14 and 19-21, to resolve

unresolved attributes in one or more products in a package. Wyatt is silent to these aspects as well. For this reason, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 12-14 and 19-21 are allowable over Mikurak.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit that claims 1-25 are allowable over the cited reference. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of the claims as now presented.

Applicant's attorney believes that this application is in condition for allowance. Should any unresolved issues remain, Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
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Date

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